

Networking with Peers: AIChE-Boston Launches Executive Forum

The AIChE-Boston Executive Forum was co-founded by Larry Evans, candidate for AIChE President-Elect and founder of Aspen Technology, and Rob Reintjes, Chair (2004-5) of the Boston local section ("the Ichthyologists") and Principal, New England Equity Group.

"We envisioned a group which would pull together senior technical executives from New England companies that utilize chemical engineering technology, and which would also include chemical engineering department chairs from the 12 universities AIChE-Boston serves," says Evans. "The group provides an opportunity for participants to enjoy the benefits of shared experience, while building bridges between academia and industry."

The primary purpose of the group, which will meet bi-monthly, is for executives from a broad spectrum of industries to get to know each other better.

Mark Farrell, an executive at Koch Membrane Systems, commented, "At the meetings I attend, all we talk about is membranes. I want an opportunity to interact with technical executives from a wide range of industries."

The invitation list included executives from diverse sectors of industry, including traditional industries such as chemical and biochemical, pharmaceuticals, specialty chemicals, plastics, metals, coatings, membrane filtration, water treatment, and also new ventures such as energy, biotechnology, nanotechnology and materials science.

"Our meeting format was designed to encourage dialogue between participants through facilitated networking," Reintjes explained. "We also feature speakers on topics selected by the group. A key component of the Forum is that it's designed from the inside out — the format will be adjusted in response to the needs and interests of the members."

At the first breakfast meeting, held in Waltham, MA on June 22, Dr. Roshan Jachuck, Director of the Process Intensification and Clean Technology (PICT) group at Clarkson University's Chemical Engineering Dept., gave a presentation on process intensification.

The benefit of the Forum to AIChE-Boston is increased expo-



Pictured left to right: Andy Irwin, Vice-Chair (2004-2005) of the Boston Section and President, Irwin Engineers; Larry Evans, founder of AspenTech; and Rob Reintjes, Chair (2004-2005) of the Boston Section and Principal, New England Equity Group.

sure to senior technical leaders in companies who hire chemical engineers. As the senior executives participating in the Forum learn about the benefits of membership in the local section, they encourage the chemical engineers employed by their organizations to attend meetings. They also provide valuable insight regarding ways to improve the programs and services offered by the local section.

After having developed the framework of the Forum, Evans and Reintjes put together a steering committee comprised of area executives to further refine the plan.

Evans and Reintjes would be happy to provide ideas and suggestions to other local sections interested in developing similar programs to improve connections between AIChE and industrial leaders. Contact Rob Reintjes at reintjes@newenglandequity.com.

Institute for Sustainability Passing the Torch and Milestones Achieved

Earl Beaver, managing partner of Practical Sustainability in Chesterfield, Missouri, has become Chair Emeritus of AIChE's Institute for Sustainability (IFS). Under Beaver's leadership, IFS, which was formally chartered by the Board of Directors in April 2004, has passed a number of milestones. Incoming IFS Chair, Calvin Cobb, 2001 president of AIChE and currently president of Calvin Cobb and Co., said "the technical foundation that Earl Beaver laid for AIChE's sustainability activities has positioned IFS for growth."

In the past 18 months, IFS has, through a grassroots project involving many AIChE members and others interested parties, developed a shared definition of sustainability; delivered workshops in a variety of venues; worked with AIChE's Sustainability Engineering Forum to program topical con-

ferences at AIChE national and annual meetings; and been a major participant in other events, such as the Green Chemistry and Engineering Conference organized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the American Chemical Society. Moreover, several major companies have joined IFS' Center for Sustainable Technology Practices (CSTP), which is developing shared training materials and metrics. Much of the CSTP work is being supported by a grant from the EPA. Charlene Wall, BASF's manager of Eco-efficiency in North America, is leading the industry group. Beaver, with support from Beth Beloff of Bridges to Sustainability, is continuing as principal investigator supporting the CSTP projects.

IFS, in cooperation with the UN Foundation and support from the Oxygen tele-

vision network, sponsored organizational meetings for the Youth Council for Sustainability. The Youth Council will provide a home for students and young adults who share a commitment to responsible, technically informed, sustainable development. Additionally, under a grant from the National Science Foundation, IFS has taken the lead in creating sustainability curricular materials for use in high school chemistry classes.

Going forward, IFS leadership is turning its focus to developing measurements of sustainability progress that have industry buy-in and support, establishing alliances and partnerships with other sustainability organizations, and securing additional funds for expansion of programs. For more information, visit IFS on the Web at <http://www.aiche.org/sustainability>.